

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
(SSTMD AC) Meeting Summary
December 11, 2008**

Item 1,2,3 – Introductions, Review of November Minutes, Chair’s Comments: The Minutes from the November 13 meeting were approved without comment. Members and guests went around the room and introduced themselves. Vice Chair **Charles Segerman** introduced County Councilmember **Marc Elrich** to the group.

Item 4 – Presentation, Bus Rapid Transit: Councilmember **Elrich** presented a proposal to the group for a Bus Rapid Transit network for Montgomery County. If Montgomery County’s present traffic patterns were tested under stringent standard tests, it would be found that most of the County would be considered to be in a state of gridlock.

Mr. Elrich began researching solutions by looking at traffic reduction efforts of other jurisdictions. At the same time, at a Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) regional report on air quality, it was announced that while the region was doing very well for Nitrogen Oxide emissions (NOx), Carbon Dioxide levels are projected to increase by 48 percent by the year 2030, despite the goal of maintaining 1990 levels. That model was obtained assuming that no further changes in air quality would be made.

A second model, based on the California LEV II Emissions Standards (California standards, known as Low Emission Vehicle II), showed that the County could see as much as a 22% increase in emissions over the same time period, which is still too much.

Under LEV II regulations, the Tier I and TLEV classifications were removed for 2004, and the remaining LEV (Low Emission Vehicle), ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicle), and SULEV (Super Low Emission Vehicle – hybrids) categories were made more stringent. These stricter versions are therefore known as "LEV II", "ULEV II", and "SULEV II."

Mr. Elrich stated that if the County were to adopt very aggressive CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards, not currently under consideration, there still be as much as a 16 percent increase in the level of emissions by the target date 2030.

Since none of the models currently being studied show enough significant improvement in CO₂ emissions, **Mr. Elrich** researched the number of cars that would need to be taken off the road to show real improvement. COG ran the analysis, and recommended an 8.3 percent traffic reduction in Montgomery County alone to hit the 2002 numbers for CO₂. The model predicted that if the proportion of single occupant vehicle traffic could be reduced to a 60-40 split of vehicles to commuters, the County could achieve 1990 levels, and traffic congestion would be eased.

Mr. Elrich also examined the existing transportation infrastructure, and found that the best option would be Bus Rapid Transit. Similar BRT systems are in place in Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Ideally, BRT buses would have dedicated lanes. The more realistic

option is to make use of the existing roadways, HOV and HOT lanes, and perhaps exclusive lanes during peak travel periods.

There are also queue jumper features and other similar options at traffic lights that have been discussed, which give the buses priority at traffic lights. However, this type of feature will probably not be a part of the plan when finished, primarily because they are not particularly effective in heavy traffic.

One feature currently under discussion is a BRT guidance system. **Mr. Elrich** displayed some slides to the group, displaying curb-guided wheels on the buses to help them turn tighter, and provide a smoother ride. The plan is to avoid optical and magnetic guidance systems. Instead of schedules, the plan would be to run these buses in set intervals.

In terms of routes, the important thing to know is where the job centers are and will be, and where the workers are coming from. **Mr. Elrich** displayed these areas to the group. The most viable solution is three north-south lines, and connecting cross lines, including the Purple Line route.

Mr. Ehrlich displayed a map of BRT possible routes, to and from high traffic areas. Many of these routes would take advantage of the Purple Line and the Inter County Connector.

While DOT would likely change some aspects of Ride On service, Metrobus and Ride On will still be fully operational. The BRT system is meant to be used in conjunction with the other transit systems.

Harry Sanders, from Purple Line Now, said that while he was quite pleased to hear **Mr. Elrich** discuss certain aspects of the Purple Line, he was concerned that those in charge of the BRT project may be concerned with cost over quality, while the goal should be to have a lot of people buy into it. **Mr. Elrich** responded that he thinks the quality of service will be better than any alternative, and only presented the costs to show how much lower in cost it would be to other alternatives.

Mr. Elrich said that the thought processes are even changing in SHA. He said that **Neil Peterson** of SHA (SHA Administrator and Governor's Highway Safety Representative) now believes that the goal should to move people through the system, not just vehicles, and that infrastructure now means transit infrastructure, and not just highways.

Tom Collins asked what **Mr. Elrich** would like the committee to do, and also how "Rapid" is defined. Rapid in this case is simply faster than it would be by car. **Mr. Elrich** said that if the committee is so moved, they can support a BRT scoping study to the County Executive.

The presentation concluded past the meeting adjournment time of 9:30 a.m. **Mr. Polk** joined the rest of the committee members in thanking Councilmember Elrich for his presentation.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:40 AM
Next meeting date: Jan. 8, 2009

Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (SSTMD AC)
Attendance Sheet
December 11, 2009

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Samantha Mazo	Linowes and Blocher LLP		X
James S. Polk, Chairman	Technology Service Corporation	X	
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online	X	
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman, Vice Chairman	North & West Sector Plan Area	X	
Andy Wexler	CBD Resident	X	
TMD Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Julian Leidman (pending replacement)	Small Business Representative	X	
Suvita Melehy	Melehy & Associates		X
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc of North America	X	
TMD Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems		X
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Chuck Kines	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
David Kantor	DOT, Commuter Services		X
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Michael Dees	Hines Properties	X	
Councilmember Marc Elrich	County Council	X	
Harry Sanders	Purple Line Now	X	
Dale Tibbits	Chief of Staff, Marc Elrich's Office	X	
Mel Tull	Silver Spring Regional Services Center	X	